



Career and Technical Education Standards Reform: Phase II

Background

- CTE Standards Revisions (Phase II) is the **second-phase in a multi-step process** to revise Tennessee's Career and Technical Education (CTE) course offerings.
- The **first phase streamlined the Programs of Study** while increasing alignment of programs to postsecondary and career opportunities. Phase I was completed in fall 2012 and implemented for the 2013-14 school year.
- The **second phase is a review and revision of specific course standards** and development of new courses to ensure all courses promoted by the department are rigorous, relevant, and student-focused. Phase II will be completed in winter 2013 for implementation beginning in the 2014-15 school year and continuing through the next few years, as courses are revised and approved.

Necessity

- CTE courses need to be adequately preparing students for success in both postsecondary training and the workforce across all 16 nationally recognized career clusters.
- Courses that are no longer meeting the needs of students need to be retired or revised and new courses be developed to address identified gap areas.
- Course standard revisions must reflect high expectations for student achievement.
 - Existing course standards have been revised or developed to:
 - increase alignment with general education and national industry standards, and
 - provide a strong framework for 21st Century Skills (soft skills) development
 - align to Common Core State Standards in Literacy for Technical Subjects, and, where applicable, Common Core State Standards in Mathematics
 - Standards must provide greater clarity around student performance expectations, thereby increasing rigor.
 - Standards must also provide a comprehensive illustration of where alignment should occur between general education and technical content.
- CTE teachers need to be given the right tools to attain higher student outcomes.
 - With these clearer, more rigorous standards, teachers now have the tools they need to best prepare students for postsecondary and career choices.
 - Instructional time will increase on the knowledge and skills that matter most, resulting in higher student outcomes.

Process

- Standards revision occurred in multiple steps, including research and data gathering, skill alignment, program of study development, and writing and reviewing. Secondary teachers, postsecondary educators, business and industry, and national benchmark standards were utilized along the way.
 - The first step of data gathering included research on the following:
 - Regional, state, and national labor and workforce data (lagging and real-time)
 - Statewide teacher survey on existing standards, with over 540 teacher responses
 - Input from Industry Advisory Councils
 - Curriculum scans from other states, postsecondary programs, and national professional organizations and accrediting bodies



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- The second step of skill alignment and program of study development included the following:
 - Alignment of programs of study to workforce needs based on state economic and labor market data
 - Development of outlines of skills necessary for each program of study and a breakdown of knowledge and skills included in current courses
 - Identification of gap areas not covered by existing courses
 - Identification of duplicate standards in existing courses
- The final step of writing and reviewing included the following:
 - Reviewing outlines of skills and knowledge with postsecondary leaders, business and industry, teachers, and comparing those against national standards
 - Working with standards writing experts to craft standards that included technical skills and Common Core State Standards for Literacy in Technical Subjects, as well as general education standards
 - Vetting a list of ~50 experienced, effective Tennessee teachers to review standards and provide critical feedback
 - Reviewing standards with sister divisions in the department, including Curriculum & Instruction, as well as Industry Advisory Councils

Results

- Revised and newly developed CTE courses have been organized into enhanced Programs of Study (sequences of courses) that include work-based learning opportunities and suggested alignments to general education subjects.
- Phase II review of course standards will begin implementation in the 2014-15 school year and include revised, new and retired courses.
- These programs include a logical progression of technical and academic knowledge with opportunities for students to demonstrate their skills. Students will benefit from the braiding of general education and CTE courses.

What's Next?

- After implementation of these new courses and programs of study, the Division will continue to critically evaluate its remaining offerings. Going forward, the Division will be exploring opportunities to provide each course with an authentic assessment option in order to gain a better picture on how students are learning.

About the Tennessee Department of Education

The Tennessee Department of Education strives to expand students' access to effective teachers and leaders, families' access to good schools, educators' access to resources and best practices and public access to information and data. We aim to be the fastest-improving state in the nation in terms of academic achievement by 2015.